



Wildlife of the World Newsletter

July 2026



European Otter (Lutra lutra) in Pembrokeshire

Hi ,

I've been enjoying spending my summer visiting different regions of Wales... and been really impressed with how much fascinating wildlife is quietly going about its business on my own doorstep while I've been gallivanting around the world! There's a short report on a few days I spent in North Wales [here](#)... thanks to Matt Dowse of RSPB Conwy for his excellent advice on where to find some of the rarer birds.

Another report on my time in Pembrokeshire (with lots of puffins!) should be out soon, followed by one on Mid-Wales which will include the strange creature on the right. It looks a bit like a weird, chubby wasp, but in fact it's a special Welsh moth. The wasp disguise is deliberate, to fool birds into leaving it alone for fear of being stung... though of course it doesn't actually have a sting at all! Its a scarce species that's rarely seen, and I was lucky to find one at the beautiful Gilfach Nature Reserve in Powys.

For this month's featured site I'm heading right across the world, but to the country that in my opinion most resembles Wales...



Welsh Clearwing (Synanthedon scoliaeformis) in Powys

Wildlife-watching Sites

Stewart Island, New Zealand



Tui (Prothemadera novaeseelandiae)

New Zealand has a unique wildlife of its own that doesn't resemble anywhere else, even its closest neighbour Australia. There are no native land mammals, but whole families of invertebrates, reptiles and birds that are found nowhere else... like the beautiful Tui above.

I've travelled throughout the country, and my favourite place is remote, wind-swept Stewart Island in the extreme south... over 80% of which has been designated as a National Park. Together with the other small islands nearby, it's one

of the best places in the world to see the iconic kiwis as well as other flightless birds like weka, kakapo and yellow-eyed penguins. With its extreme southern location it's also visited by special Antarctic species including several different albatrosses and the awesome elephant seal below.



Shy Albatross (Thalassarche cauta)

If you're lucky enough to find yourself in New Zealand I'd strongly recommend trying to get down to Stewart Island. The chance to see wild kiwis is worth the trip alone, but you can also experience the ancient forests that covered the islands before people arrived, and the unique wildlife that inhabits them.



Southern Elephant Seal (Mirounga leonina)

Events and Books

My challenge to collect photos of Welsh wildlife is progressing well but there's plenty more still to be done, particularly in Mid Wales and the Bannau Brycheniog (Brecon Beacons). Hopefully I might be able to share the results with you over the next few months.

In the meantime, if you have any comments, suggestions or questions about this newsletter, my reports or wildlife generally please get in touch either by replying to this email or via my website.

Best Wishes

Hugh



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